

*The Center Creek Story*

Through the years, the settlers and residents of Center Creek in eastern Provo Valley have enjoyed abundant living. They have enjoyed a life close to the soil. They have been close to the sun-lit pastures where cattle peacefully graze, and they have been close to the fields where seeds have sprouted and grown to provide food for men. There has been a life of prayer and toil mixed in along each row of seeds sown; of gratitude and thanksgiving with each harvest; and the joy of friends and loved ones close at hand.

Those who first settled the rich, green meadow lands along Center Creek were drawn there by the irrigation water available. Some of these pioneers who built log homes for their families and began clearing the land for farming were Thomas Ross, Joseph Fawcett, Joseph Cluff, James Adams and Jackson Smith.

By early 1861 there were 12 families living along the creek. This soon grew to 20 families, and the population was large enough to organize a branch of the Church. John Harvey moved to the community in 1861 to organize the branch and direct the Church activities. Reports are that the meetings were well attended, with some of the credit undoubtedly going to Ann Harvey who enlivened the meetings by an excellent choir that she trained and directed.

Farming activities in the community continued until 1866 when Indian troubles and the Black Hawk War broke out. The settlers were advised to leave their outlying homes along Center Creek and move closer to the main settlements of Heber. For more than 10 years the lands along Center Creek were uninhabited.

By 1877 the Indian problems were solved and leaders in the valley deemed it safe for those along Center Creek to return to their homes. Many of the original families had become established near Heber City and decided not to return.

Those who were instrumental in reestablishing Center were William Richardson Sr., a Mr. Blancher, Archie Sellers Sr., Joseph Thomas, Benjamin Cluff, George Muir Sr., William Pridey, William Cole, George Hyrum Sweat and Sid Worsley. In 1879 the Worsley homestead was purchased and developed by James Lindsay.

The Center Ward was organized on July 15, 1877 with Benjamin Cluff as Bishop. He chose as his counselors Sidney Worsley and John Harvey. Other counselors who served with Bishop Cluff were John Baird, William Blake and Archibald Richardson.